

Random Encounters

Weaving a Web of Evil

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Adventure Hooks

This installment presents adventure hooks that DMs can use to introduce the spell weavers' Web into game campaigns.



- Altazzar Redmane, a wealthy local halfling merchant, seeks out the PCs to recover a magic item that was recently stolen from his home. "Blackguard" is an *onyx dog figurine of wondrous power* that has been in the merchant's family for generations, and he dearly wants it back. He is convinced that the local thieves' guild is responsible for the theft, but he's only partially correct. Guild thieves did burglarize Redmane's home a few nights ago, but one of the culprits is an agent of the Web. She diverted the *onyx dog* to the spell weavers.
- An annual celebration is about to take place in the city; it can be a seasonal holiday, a religious observance, or even the ruler's birthday, but whatever the reason, everyone is getting ready for a big party. Large public gatherings such as these always attract thieves, and Octavius Thalaysin, a half-elven noble in the city, engages the heroes to discreetly protect him, his guests, and his lavish estate in the city's best neighborhood from rumored thieves and ruffians running amok in the city lately. In fact, a duo of thieves do show up to take various magic items at a large event that Octavius holds, though the theft of various items can be but one of the events that draw the attentions of the PCs.
- One of the characters notices (with a sufficient Spot result) an ornate +2 *dagger* in a location where one would not expect to find such an item; the dagger could be found in an alleyway, a stable, in a garbage pit, down a well, or even in the hallway of the inn where the PCs are staying. The night before, an agent of the Web stole the dagger from its drunken owner. The owner noticed the theft before the thief could make his getaway, and rather than be caught with the dagger on his person, he dropped it or threw it away the first chance he had. The thief, called Skav by his few friends, is a young human man who is not affiliated with the local guild. He escaped capture, but the dagger's owner not only wants the weapon back, he also wants the thief who stole it captured.
- The heroes hear rumors that a new thieves' guild is trying to infiltrate the city. The rumormongers point to the recent rash of break-ins, robberies, and thefts from caravans as evidence. These people say that a turf war between the newcomers and the established guild cannot be far away. Of course, the "newcomers" are merely the agents of the spell weavers' Web, and the humanoid spellcasters do not aspire to be crime lords; they just want magic items. Of course, the citizens and rulers of the city do not know this, and neither does the hierarchy of the city's resident guild. Any of these factions could take actions based on these rumors, and these actions might impact the operations of the Web.
- The heroes come across an agent of the Web either in the act of stealing a magic item for his multiarmed masters or they spy him entering the sewers to drop off a bundle containing at least one magic item for the spell weavers. The PCs could confront the agent, observe him dropping the bundle and returning to the city's surface and follow him, or they could wait to see that, in an hour or so, a grell comes to pick up the bundle and take it deeper into the labyrinthine underground beneath the city.
- One of the PCs receives a message that she has a gift or inheritance awaiting her in a city under which the spell weavers have their lair. The message says to report to the city's chief constable to get the item: a magic item usable by the character in question that fits the theme and power level of the campaign. By the time the heroes reach the city, however, agents of the Web have stolen the item. Chief Constable Garrick Weavewarren, a tall middle-aged human male, apologizes profusely for the loss of the item. He seems deeply embarrassed to have lost the item. Do the PCs believe his story that the item has been stolen? Do they check out the stories, mentioned by Garrick, that numerous magic items have disappeared throughout the city over the last few months? Are the heroes willing to help Garrick and the constabulary uncover the secret behind these thefts?

- The PCs return from an adventure nearby, wounded and sore, but victorious. The heroes are rich and likely possess at least one new magic item. After the player characters relax but before they can recover and heal completely, agents of the Web try to steal the new magic item(s). Are the PCs in any condition to take on the Web's masters so soon after their previous adventure, assuming they can track the item or the thieves back to the spell weavers' lair?
- The spell weavers determine that too much attention is being attracted to their agents' thefts of magic items, and the spellcasters decide to divert suspicion. If the PCs regularly visit or reside in the city where the spell weavers have their operation, the monstrous spellcasters choose the heroes, especially if the party has at least one rogue among its members. The agents of the Web plant stolen minor magic items among the heroes' property, and a *charmed* constable or other minion of the spell weavers publicly accuses the PCs of being the thieves. Assuming the PCs proclaim their innocence, the agent of the Web asks to search the PCs and their property in front of witnesses. When the stolen items are discovered, the news spreads across the city like wildfire. How do the heroes defend themselves now? Do they flee and try to find who set them up and why?

Bringing the Parts Together

Using the adventure hooks above should certainly draw together the organization, its members, and the PCs in some form or other. As mentioned before, DMs may consider having the whole of this organization be the mere tip of the iceberg and place one like it in every large town the PCs visit.

Coming in Part 4 of Weaving a Web of Evil

Next time, meet the owner of a magic shop who wants her stolen goods back.

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